

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 and 7-13 are pending in this application.

Independent claims 1, 5 and 7, have been amended to recite "wherein the composition of said rubber stopper is not the same as the composition of said covering layer". Support for this amendment appears in the present specification at pages 6-7 and 9, the examples and the claims as originally filed, all of which disclose a rubber stopper having a composition that is not the same as the composition of the covering layer. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added.

It is believed that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated **January 23, 2004**.

The Examiner is thanked for conducting an interview with the undersigned on June 22, 2004.

In view of the claims as amended and the remarks set forth below, further and favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

I. Claims 1, 4, 9 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Katsuma (U.S. Patent No. 5,824,962) in view of Iverson (U.S. Patent No. 3,816,641).

The Examiner takes the position that it would be obvious to the skilled artisan, to provide the rubber stopper of Katsuma which is disposed between a covered cable and a connector housing of a waterproof connector, with the material of Iverson that can bond the rubber stopper to a covering

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layer of a covered cable when the rubber stopper is heated. The Examiner states that the stopper of Iverson is the same material as the sheath of the cable and which is heat-bonded to the cable so that the materials of the stopper and the sheath merge.

In view of the following, this rejection is overcome.

As discussed in the interview between the undersigned and Examiner Nguyen on June 22, 2004, Iverson requires that the composition of the sheath and preform be the same.

Independent claims 1, 5 and 7, have been amended to require that the composition of the rubber stopper and the composition of the covering layer are not the same. The remaining claims are all directly or indirectly dependent on claims 1, 5 or 7. Support for the claims as amended appears throughout the specification, examples and claims as originally filed, where the composition of the rubber stopper and the composition of the covering layer, are different.

Examiner Nguyen is thanked for indicating that the above amendment would, absent any intervening prior art, distinguish the present claims from the art of record.

In view of the claims as amended, it is submitted that nothing in any of the applied references, renders the claimed invention obvious within the meaning of 35 USC § 103. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

II. *Claims 2, 5 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katsuma in view of Iversen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Wada.*

The Examiner states that it would have been obvious to the skilled artisan to use the rubber composition as taught by Wada for the stopper and the sheath of Katsuma since the rubber composition taught by Wada has an excellent non-tackiness such that it can be easily handled during the connection process.

Independent claims 1, 5 and 7, have been amended to require that the composition of the rubber stopper and the composition of the covering layer are not the same. Claims 2 and 12 are directly or indirectly dependent on claims 1, 5 or 7.

In view of the claims as amended, this rejection is believed to be moot.

In view of the claims as amended, it is submitted that nothing in any of the applied references, renders the claimed invention obvious within the meaning of 35 USC § 103. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

III *Claims 3, 7, 8, 10 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katsuma in view of Iversen as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Yoshino.*

The Examiner states that it would have been obvious to the skilled artisan to use the rubber composition as taught by Yoshino for the stopper of Katsuma since the rubber composition of Yoshino is improved in hardness, modulus and tear strength.

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Independent claims 1, 5 and 7, have been amended to require that the composition of the rubber stopper and the composition of the covering layer are not the same. Claims 3, 8, 10 and 13 are all directly or indirectly dependent on claims 1, 5 or 7.

In view of the claims as amended, this rejection is believed to be moot.

In view of the claims as amended, it is submitted that nothing in any of the applied references, renders the claimed invention obvious within the meaning of 35 USC § 103. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

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In view of the claims as amended and the accompanying remarks, the claims are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

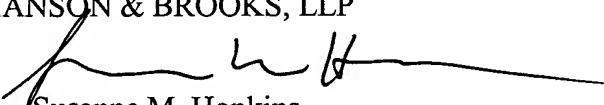
If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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